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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**The Future Today:
Creating an All Purpose Battalion to Enhance the Marine Corps' Capabilities for Tomorrow,
Today**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: The Future Today: Creating an All Purpose Battalion to Enhance the Marine Corps' Capabilities for Tomorrow, Today

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Thesis: The development of an All Purpose (AP) Battalion, from predominantly existing expertise, will provide the Marine Corps with a permanent standing, flexible, professional, and unified force, and will enable Marine Corps to operate efficiently across the spectrum of modern conflict while remaining focused on its core competencies.

Discussion: Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, dated November 28, 2005, established that "Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense (DoD) shall be prepared to conduct and support." The Commandant provides the Marine Corps with its vision for the future based on requirements put forth by the DoD and the Marine Corps' role in the U.S. National Security Strategy. The Commandant provided his vision of the future of the Marine Corps in the Marine Corps Operating Concepts for a Changing Security Environment, Second Edition June 2007. The Marine Corps can fulfill his vision, as well as the greater DoD vision with a slight organizational change in structure and allocation of expertise in the Marine Corps. This reorganization will take current capabilities and place them under one command element. This simple creation of a new unit, essentially a headquarters element, will adhere to the principle of unity of command and provide the Marine Corps with a credible and confident force in readiness, capable of supporting all aspects of full spectrum operations as well as SSTR operations. This new unit is the All Purpose Battalion (AP Bn). The AP Bn will primarily focus its efforts on non-kinetic military actions, enabling the remainder of the Corps to return its focus to core competencies that have eroded over the past six years. The AP Bn will consist of: a headquarters element, civil affairs element, health and human services element with an implicit medical and dental support capability, information operations element, military and police training element, and an infrastructure and contracting specialist. Within the headquarters element, there will also be a staff judge advocate, interagency liaison specialist, and a regional expert in the form of either a Regional Area Officer or a Foreign Area Officer. The AP Battalions will be located at Camp Pendleton, 29 Palms, Camp Smith, and Camp Lejeune with their parent commands being their respective Marine Expeditionary Force commands. This work does not address command relationships it only serves to make suggestions, with the bottom line that the capability must be there regardless of the command relationships beyond the Marine Expeditionary Force level. Each battalion will consist of detachments with the same capabilities as stated above. These detachments can then develop habitual relationships with the respective infantry units at their assigned location, developing expertise and cohesion. This enables each unit to be a truly "plug and play" organization, providing a commonly trained, commonly sourced, capability to each Marine infantry unit deploying from home station to any locale in the world.

Conclusion: The Marine Corps must be able to operate across all spectrums of combat. The Marine Corps must avoid what Colin S. Gray (Summer 2006) calls "The sin of [presentism]," a view that future concepts and considerations are developed with heavy influence from the current situation. The AP Battalion will allow the Marine Corps to return to its core competencies and address the central ideas for conducting SSTR Operations as put forth in the DoD publication Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition and Reconstruction Operations Joint Concept, v. 2 December 2006, as well as the complex issues associated with modern conflicts.

DISCLAIMER

THE OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF EITHER THE MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY. REFERENCES TO THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	ii
DISCLAIMER	iii
PREFACE	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	3
CHANGING CHARACTER.....	4
CORE COMPETENCIES- FULL SPECTRUM OPERATIONS.....	5
THE AP BATTALION'S RELEVANCE IN IRREGULAR WARFARE.....	7
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES.....	9
CONCLUSION.....	21
NOTES.....	23
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	24

PREFACE

I began writing the initial concepts for this paper in the early part of 2007 while serving as the operations officer of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines. Third Battalion Seventh Marines was identified as a “surge” battalion; I immediately began trying to coordinate with the anticipated attachments. This was done to line up Mojave Viper dates, as well as verify each unit’s completion of the pre-deployment training program per the Marine Corps Order. I found that while everyone was completely willing to help and work as hard as necessary to prepare for the impending deployment, the process generally seemed inefficient. Knowing my experience was unique I held onto my concerns and awaited an opportunity to see what others had experienced once I arrived at Command and Staff College. I found that despite heroic efforts across the Corps, inefficiency reigned. Very few units were able to identify their attachments, the organization of their military transition teams or have lead-time on who they may lose to fill some of these key billets. As recently as 20 March 2008, a unit less than 170 days from deploying remains unaware of these key issues. This is despite the belief the system is rectified, according to comments at the recent “Long War” conference held at Gray Research Center in Quantico, Virginia. This is not designed to offer a simple solution, but to identify concerns and issues that are very real to marines in the operating forces today and for the foreseeable future, based on the way ahead.

INTRODUCTION

“War is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means.”¹ As a nation develops a strategic vision and foreign policy, it allows the military instrument of national power to determine its requirements and role in the accomplishment of that national strategic vision. A changing national policy and strategy create a difficult environment for military planners to develop a national military strategy. As the head of his service, the Commandant provides the Marine Corps with its vision for the future based on requirements put forth by the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Marine Corps’ role in the U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS). Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, dated November 28, 2005, established, “Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense (DoD) shall be prepared to conduct and support.”² General James T. Conway, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, provided the following planning guidance in the 34th CMC Planning Guidance 2006: “Evolve Marine Corps and naval operating concepts that address our contributions to Combatant Commanders’ theater security cooperation plans even as we maintain our contingency and crisis response capability.” As conflicts become increasingly globalized; institutions must adapt new methods and capabilities to address these new issues and concerns.

The recent *Marine Corps Operating Concepts for a Changing Security Environment*, June 2007 provides the Marine Corps with an even more detailed vision of the future from the Commandant. The Commandant lists his priorities for the Marine Corps:

1. Achieve victory in the Long War.
2. “Right size” our corps to achieve a 1:2 deployment to dwell ratio.
3. Provide our Nation with a naval force that is fully prepared for employment as a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) across the spectrum of conflict.
4. Reset and modernize to “be most ready when the nation is least ready.”
5. Improve the quality of life for our Marine s and their families.

6. Rededicate ourselves to our Core Values and warrior ethos.
7. Posture the Marine Corps for the future.³

The Commandant provided the Marine Corps with its vision for the future. To accomplish this vision will require organizational change in the structure of the Marine Corps and specific enabling functions.

This reorganization will take current capabilities and place them under one command. This simple creation of a new unit, essentially a headquarters element, will adhere to the principle of unity of command and provide the Marine Corps with a credible and confident force in readiness, capable of supporting all aspects of full spectrum operations as well as SSTR operations. This new unit is the All Purpose (AP) Battalion. The AP Battalion will primarily focus its efforts on non-kinetic military actions, enabling the remainder of the Corps to return its focus to core competencies that have eroded over the past six years. The AP Battalion will consist of: a headquarters element, civil affairs element, health and human services element with an implicit medical and dental support capability, information operations element, military and police training element, and an infrastructure and contracting specialist. Within the headquarters element, there will also be a staff judge advocate, interagency liaison specialist, and a regional expert in the form of either a Regional Area Officer or a Foreign Area Officer. The development of an AP Battalion, from predominantly existing expertise, will provide the Marine Corps with a permanently standing, flexible, professional, unified force.

The need for the AP Battalion is based on five assumptions. The first is the view that the nature of war remains constant and that only the character of war has changed; the “new” is nothing more than a change in the way some choose to fight. The second and third assumptions come from the unclassified version of the Marine Corps’ “Long War Concept” (work in progress). These assumptions are that “The Marine Corps will remain a general purpose force

capable of full spectrum operations, with an emphasis on Irregular Warfare, and that geographic Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) will have a greater demand for general purpose forces to conduct theater security cooperation.”⁴ A fourth assumption considers the infantry battalion the core unit of the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force (SCMAGTF). A fifth and final assumption is that the infantry battalion does not currently possess the organic capabilities to function in this role and across the full spectrum of operations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design conducted used triangulation as presented in Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods by Michael Quinn Patton. “Triangulation or the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena or programs. This can mean using several kinds of data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.”⁵ This research project used primary and secondary sources, personal interviews, surveys, and personal correspondences, as well as Marine Corps directives and field manuals. All data was collected in confidence and the use of any particular individual’s name was approved beforehand and done with the complete consent of the party involved. The remainder of participants will remain anonymous. The triangulation allowed the researcher to see recurring patterns and themes in the research and create recommended organizational and professional military education adaptations. The analysis specifically focused on the Marine Corps’ need to retain traditional core competencies and posture itself for future operations based on current and developing employment concepts. A brief discussion of Irregular Warfare and of the unchanging nature of war will be the initial point to begin the analysis.

CHANGING CHARACTER

It is the character of non-state warfare that is “new.” How nation states are attacked and are likely to be attacked in the future has changed with the modern era. This could be viewed as a tactic, in accordance with the MCRP 5-12A, “Ordered arrangement and maneuver of units in relation to each other, the terrain, and the enemy in order to translate potential combat power into victorious battles and engagements.”⁶ The nature of war does not simply change with a change in tactics like suicide bombers, attacks against innocent civilians, or actions taken against a legitimate government to exercise influence. While the current objective may be considered a war for the support or control of a population, it is still a battle between opposing wills.

The events of 9-11 and the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan do not mark an end to nation-state versus nation-state warfare, nor do they signify a change in the nature of war; instead, they signify a change in the character of war. It is generally accepted by scholars and students of Clausewitz’s “paradoxical trinity” that the trinity organizes the nature, or essence, of war into three elements: the people, the commander and his army, and the government. Clausewitz states, “These three tendencies are like different codes of law deep rooted in their subject and yet variable in relationship to one another.”⁷ This trinity and this concept apply to the conflicts the United States and its allies find themselves in today.

There is a balance between the various thoughts of old and new theorists, with no one being 100% correct. Any one that claims to have the “right answer” is likely contradicting their concept of multi-faceted conflict, or irregular warfare. F.G. Hoffman writes, “Tomorrow’s conflicts will not be easily categorized into simple classifications of conventional or irregular. In fact, some of today’s best thinking acknowledges the blurring of lines between modes of war. Our greatest challenge will not come from a state that selects one approach, but from states or

groups that select from the whole menu of tactics and technologies to meet its own strategic cultural geography.”⁸ If one accepts Hoffman’s premise that the enemy will likely choose from any one of many approaches, then the future military must adapt accordingly to remain a well-balanced full spectrum capable force.

CORE COMPETENCIES- FULL SPECTRUM OPERATIONS

The Marine Corps is known for making do with less, but too much of that attitude can be harmful. The Marine Corps is tenuously close to trading skills for the current fight at the expense of any future endeavors. The idea of tactical distributed operations, with higher trained Marines, giving them more autonomy, maximizing dispersion and the ability to aggregate forces rapidly is great. Without the basic structure in place to support historic concepts and missions, future ones need to be evaluated thoroughly for feasibility and supportability.

Many of the “modern” ideas have been around for decades, yet they now receive titles that cause confusion and undue concern. A perfect example of this is the aforementioned concept of distributed operations. Ask any ten Marines what distributed operations are and you will get ten different concepts. The bottom line is units have always conducted distributed operations in one form or another. The Marine Corps and the Navy know what split Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) operations are; why does it need a new name? This type of disconnect is being addressed as more information is being pushed out at the user level, but much like the “strategic Corporal,” sometimes the executor has a different view than the author.

The current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have brought about many changes. The technical advances alone have been noteworthy, with unmanned aerial vehicles, modern communications systems and improved optics to list a few. These advances in training,

technology, and overall capability are welcomed on the battlefield, but they have come at a cost, as demonstrated in the following examples.

The idea that the Marine Corps remains a “Naval force that is fully prepared for employment as a MAGTF across the spectrum of conflict,” is questionable as the Commandant has advised and requires great attention. One of the most complex operations the Marine Corps can be tasked to execute is an amphibious landing on an opposed shore. The current lack of experience and continual rotations to land locked conflicts seems only likely to reinforce the Commandant’s concerns. According to the initial entry demographics of the current class of Captains at the Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School, 84% of the students have been involved in combat operations, while only 19% have participated in an amphibious operation, via a Marine Expeditionary Unit deployment. While interviewing a former tactics instructor from Marine Air Wing Training Squadron in Yuma, Arizona, he expressed concern that, “75% of the West Coast rotary wing squadrons have not been on the boat on the past few years based on an organizational change to support operations in Iraq.”⁹

Counterinsurgency concepts are being taught at formal schools, in battalion classrooms, and dress rehearsed at capstone events like Mojave Viper in Twenty-Nine Palms, California, to provide units a certification prior to participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom¹⁰. These tactics, techniques, and procedures are required for the battles of today and will have a role in all future conflicts. This focus on the present fight must be kept in perspective.

Shortsighted gains by making counterinsurgency practices the focus of infantry battalions at the expense of core capabilities must be balanced carefully; as they may leave, the Corps unprepared when the high end conflicts arise. “As we moved east to support operations around Fallujah in April 2004, our fire support coordination center was a bit rusty having been acting as

the information operations cell during most of work ups and to that point in the deployment. We made it work, but the fire support skills atrophied big time in only two to four months.”¹¹

Sun Tzu once said, “It is a doctrine of war not to assume the enemy will not come, but rather to rely on one’s readiness to meet him; not to presume he will not attack, but rather to make one’s self invincible.”¹² A modern fighting force must be able to establish security, provide basic government, defeat insurgents, conduct combat operations across the entire spectrum of conflict, and ensure development of critical infrastructure to a usable state. Based on personal experience with two separate deployments to Iraq these components of the fight cannot be approached as individual lines of operation attacked sequentially, but must be addressed at the same time. How might the Marine Corps more efficiently tackle these different areas?

A possible concept to cover the gap between what some may argue should be a civilian function in the form of nation building will now be explored. This organization can specialize and focus, while the remainder of the Corps resets and re-establishes its core competencies that make the Marine Corps one of the finest fighting organizations in history. The answer is the development of the AP Battalion.

THE AP BATTALION’S RELEVANCE IN IRREGULAR WARFARE

There are many books advocating Irregular Warfare (IW) as the “new” ways wars will be fought. The best and brightest from all backgrounds are attempting to address conflicts in this new realm. These individuals have developed some intriguing views of the future and have many recommendations on the changes that “must be made” to confront the “new” threat, and fight successfully in this type of warfare. Proper consideration of any change in how warfare is

labeled and evaluated, or should be fought, as in the presentation of Irregular Warfare, must first be defined.

A working definition of irregular warfare, approved by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, 17 April 2006 can be found in the *Multi-Service Concept for Irregular Warfare*, published August 2006. This publication defines irregular warfare as “A form of warfare that has as its objective the credibility and/or legitimacy of the relevant political authority with the goal of undermining or supporting that authority. Irregular Warfare favors indirect approaches, capabilities to seek asymmetric advantages, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”¹³ This definition is demonstrative of the war in Iraq, Afghanistan and what many experts argue will be the face of future conflicts as well.

This type of warfare requires an integrated multifaceted approach at all levels of government, as demonstrated by the concerns in Joint Operating Concepts, Presidential Directives, and mandates from the DoD. These thoughts and concerns to ensure the application of all the instruments of national power are not new. President John F. Kennedy once said, “You [military professionals] must know something about tactics and ... logistics, but also economics and politics and diplomacy and history. You must know everything you can about military power, and you must also understand the limits of military power. You must understand that few of the important problems of our time have...been finally solved by military power alone.”¹⁴ Today this vision of the military is being revisited and institutionally addressed.

For example, the DoD QDR Execution Roadmap Building Partnership Capacity, 22 May 2006 states, “By November 2006, the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, in coordination with the Chairman, shall provide the Deputy Secretary with a plan of action for generating a **DoD capability** to enable strategic partnerships to extend governance to **under-and ungoverned**

areas. Governance shall include security, economy, political institutions, and rule of law”¹⁵

Based on these ideals, how could the Marine Corps become a more efficient tool in the application of this type of policy, before during and after high intensity conflict? The answer is the development of the AP Battalion.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

A recent survey of officers from battalion through regimental staffs shows 90% did not work with their civil affairs detachment prior to their last deployment, highlighting the need for standardization. The survey identified other shortfalls with contracting specialist, host nation security force trainers and military working dogs just to name a few.

Junior leaders now ask who the engineer platoon commander is. Who is leading the civil affairs detachment? Is the assistant operations officer or fire support coordinator leading the information operations detachment? Who is being sent to an advisor team? While seen as routine questions today, it would be difficult to find these units listed in the task organization section of an operations order just a decade ago.

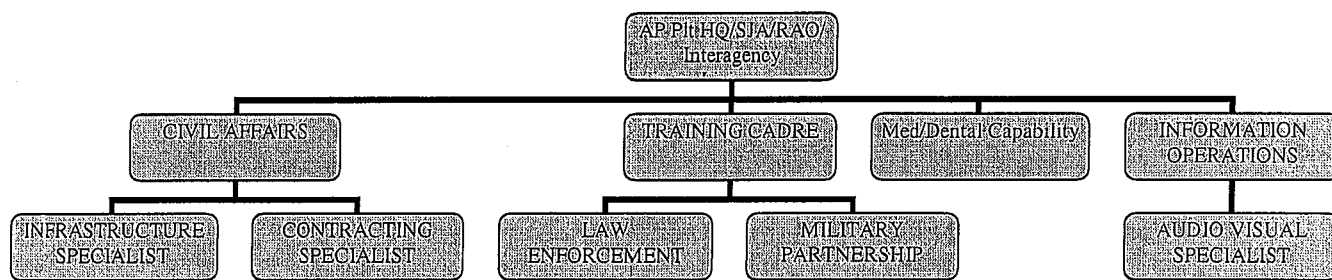
The invisible portion of this now “standardized” make up is where do the Marines to staff these key positions come from? When do they arrive? What is the command relationship? When do we detach our Marines, who are responsible for their training? Where is their ammunition coming from? No one would consider this list trivial or complete, nor would anyone call these confused relationships “plug and play”. The concept of “plug and play” is a buzz word at many Marine Corps briefs and the AP Battalion could make this now normal occurrence just that. A unified, one stop command with all of the high demand low-density specialty military occupational specialties needed to fight in the modern environment.

The forming of the AP Battalion will be one of organizational change and outlook. It will simply require bringing together many preexisting capabilities under one command. As units travel to and from current obligations in Iraq and Afghanistan, they are reinforced with personnel possessing special skills. Infantry battalions routinely adapt their table of organization to the specific mission. These reinforcements and mission adaptations fall under the term task organized.

Despite being in the sixth year of the current conflict staffing and standing up such special skills units remains a challenge. Active duty artillery units are actively engaged in civil military operations, leaving the Marine Corps with young artillery officers that "have never fired a round outside of the basic course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma,"¹⁶ according to an artilleryman that recently left the operating forces. This is not representative of a force that will be most ready when the nation is least ready, nor one capable of executing operations across the full spectrum of conflict. Transformation must include an honest recognition of these institutional shortfalls and address it through an organizational change.

Most of the proponents of irregular warfare and tenants of counter insurgency warfare do require some specialized capabilities. The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency manual FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 describes in detail some "Logical lines of operation in counterinsurgency: combat operations/civil security operations, host nation security forces, essential services, governance, and economic development."¹⁷ These specialized capabilities would simply become resident in the AP Battalion. Below is a basic structure of a detachment

that would attach to its supported infantry battalion.



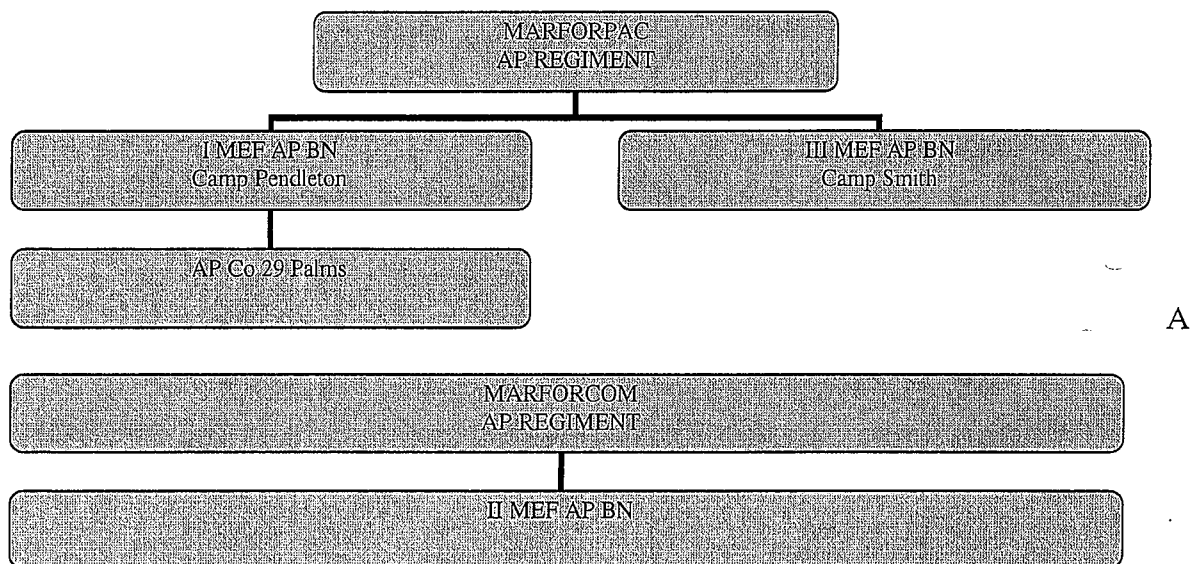
The AP detachment is part of a battalion comprised of individual companies and platoons with the following capabilities, which could be staffed from across the MEF. Recommendations from the Long War concept brief are in italics with more recommendations afterward: *civil affairs specialist, information operations personnel, operational law subject matter expert, contracting specialist, foreign internal defense training specialist, a police training capability, regional area officers (RAO), construction/infrastructure specialist (vertical construction, industrial electricity, sewage, water production/procurement and garbage) and an interagency specialist (not just a *liaison*) to name a few.*

The Marines who would fill these positions would all be active duty personnel. There must be enough units to facilitate a 1:2 deployment ratio in accordance with the Commandant's guidance. The units could become part of the MEF headquarters battalion, which is already a standing element. This would eliminate the need for significant command infrastructure creation.

Very much like the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) "chop dates" of old, that directed the forming of the battalion landing team (BLT) that would be internal to the MEU as its ground combat element or GCE, each deploying battalion would receive this enhanced capability at no cost to its organic force structure. The AP platoon could attach to the deploying infantry battalion three months prior to the units deployment in order to participate in the battalion's

capstone exercise. This early attachment date provides unity of command, allows cross training to occur, and fosters the personal relationships within the unit. The human factor remains of the utmost importance and is critical to combating an enemy or maintaining a consistent message when involved in security cooperation style missions.

The battalions with their proposed locations are represented within the diagram below. The bottom line concept beyond ownership is that each MEF must have access to these specialty skills. As a MEF Commander designates a SCMagTF, he must be able to go to the AP units and immediately fill the needs of the SCMagTF Commander.



The units would need to be large enough to provide forces to each deploying battalion, regardless of where that battalion is going. This is based on the concept that no one knows when a unit may be called into action. A focus on a particular deployment type is flawed.

The reality of global circumstances dictates that units are often vectored to a crisis with little notice. This has occurred often in the past five years as MEUs have responded to hurricanes, tidal waves, and earthquakes in various countries around the globe, only to ultimately

end up on the ground supporting operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. These crises require specialized capabilities to execute all of the assigned tasks that may arise. A unit conducting a security cooperation mission cannot suddenly be stripped of its specialist to enable a disparate crisis response unit to have its full table of organization. Keeping with the Commandant's guidance a unit must be prepared to conduct forcible entry operations, which could rapidly transition to coup de main operations, followed immediately by security and stability operations, there can be no delay in this mission transformation. A delay at any point along this continuum allows the adversary the opportunity to regain the initiative. Regardless of the title or classification given to modern conflict, whether it is Irregular Warfare, 4th Generation Warfare, Hybrid Warfare, or Counterinsurgency Operations-- the initiative must never be yielded to the enemy. As the battalion and its associated attachments prosecute high intensity combat operations, or conduct security cooperation, the AP unit would follow immediately in trace. The AP unit could establish initial contact with the populace and address their needs immediately, while the remainder of the unit continues to conduct high intensity combat operations. This simple action would minimize the time from high intensity conflict to stabilization. This would add credibility to any mission in the global media and minimize the amount of time available to an adversary to paint U.S. forces solely as "occupiers."

Two counter insurgency theorists consider the initial governmental response to an insurgency of utmost importance. David Galula, when discussing potential counterinsurgent actions, states, "Politics becomes an active instrument of operation. And so intricate is the interplay between the political and military actions that they can not be tidily separated; contrary, every military move has to be weighed with regard to its political effects, and vice versa."¹⁸ Bard O'Neill presents his view on the government's role in counterinsurgency as, "Of all the

variables that have bearing on the progress and outcome of insurgencies, none is more important than the government response.”¹⁹ The establishment of legitimacy is a response.

This fight for legitimacy further demonstrates the political aspects at the root of any cooperation operation and which cannot be ignored during the development of these units. Imagine the possible ramifications if you only create a handful of AP units and are forced to withdraw this capability from a security cooperation unit actively engaged with a third world partner. An immediate perception of abandonment would stress diplomatic relations and may embolden the parties that these very sort of operations are designed to deter. If fledgling nation and its government were abandoned it would immediately be used by the government’s adversaries as an example of illegitimacy.

Units built with these special skills sets could immediately provide a “governmental” response. While there may be some hesitancy when it comes to what nation building is, one need only look at the current interagency process to realize much of this will fall to the military in the near future. It is here where the necessity for an interagency specialist becomes apparent.

The interagency piece of modern conflict cannot be overlooked or under utilized. Agencies like USAID come with money and expertise that are not resident in the military. Understanding how to maximize the interagency partners can lead to rapid success in an uncertain environment. An interagency student at Command and Staff College stated that a one or two year stationing with an active duty deploying Marine unit was not outlandish amongst his peer group. The thought was generally that many people are talking of the interagency process, but that little action to truly address the issues at their core are occurring. As the unit within the military that is likely to be the first to respond around the globe, why not develop this critical link.

Policy will drive military action as discussed, but a mindset shift to the idea of preemption through security relationships must be made. A study of Ramon Magsaysay's actions in the Huk Insurrection provides more historic context for the importance of the government's response. As a man of the people, Magsaysay was able to see and understand the issues of the basic civilian and insurgent. He was able to recognize the importance of legitimacy and applicability of a professional military force. His simple act of paying his troops, enabling them to pay local villagers for goods and services was a huge step in the right direction. A security cooperation deployment can enhance the government's legitimacy and mitigate the potential for unrest, before it takes root. These relationships alone could subvert a crisis.

A concept unit that has received funding for FY-08 to stand up a coordination headquarters is set up along very similar lines to the AP Battalion: it is the Marine Corps Training and Advisor Group (MCTAG). The primary difference is the MCTAG is more of an advisor group. The AP Battalion concept is an enabler at the battalion level, a force multiplier with application across the spectrum of operations. The MCTAG operates above the tactical level associated with the battalion, while the AP detachment works directly for the battalion commander. The AP detachment and battalion would possess the skills organic in the MCTAG, but have additional ones beyond a conventional advisory group skill set. The AP Battalion's establishment as a stand-alone unit will enhance pre-deployment training, provide ease of standardization, and ensure unity of command from the very beginning. The AP Battalion and its subordinate units would be more versatile and would not be limited to only an advisor role. The AP Battalion would fill a gap that is currently managed by coordinating with multiple commands within the active and reserve component. The AP Battalion would allow training

methodologies and timelines to be established that could become a standardized deployment package.

The MCTAG assists the SCMAGTF commander in maintaining the theater perspective as he works his area of operations (AO). As the Marines of the AP Battalion rotate from the operating forces, some could serve at the MCTAG level as a 'B' billet. MCTAG could shift its focus within a given theater to assist in crisis response without negatively affecting the overall campaign design within a given AO. The creation of the advisor group and the AP Battalion would enable the infantry battalion operating in the littorals of Africa to retain the AP detachment's capabilities for security cooperation. The SCMAGTF could then backload to conduct a Humanitarian Assistance Operation in a neighboring country, and then suddenly move directly into high intensity combat operations in southwest Asia. The infantry battalion could do this with its organic "rebuilding" capability that is provided when an AP Battalion detachment is assigned to that core infantry unit.

An immediate response to the populace in the wake of the cessation of hostilities in the form of, essential service capability and basic government functioning is essential. This was a need identified by Sir Stanley Maude following his conquering of Baghdad: "A military administration had to be set up, and correct relations established with such remnants of the civilian power as it seemed desirable to retain. The question of sanitation in particular was promptly and energetically grappled with."²⁰ Who resident to the SCMAGTF would be the "first responder?" The AP detachment would come with all of this capability and more. The presence of engineers, within the civil affairs section, capable of standing up a downed civilian electrical grid or producing water could immediately endear a population to an outside force.

The Civil Affairs (CA) element currently resides in the reserves. These units should be transitioned back to active duty, in order to facilitate timely pre-deployment training and ensure involvement through continued habitual relationship development. The CA element of the AP detachment should consist of approximately twelve to twenty personnel. This would enable a team to go with each company and have effects across the battle space. It would allow the CA element to retain relative freedom of movement during combat operations, without impacting others to provide security as the CA element operated in trace of lead elements. As stated, the CA element would have some Marines that would require specific skills training like electricity, sewage, and water. If the Marine Corps does not have the resources to provide this type of training, Marines could be sent to trade schools or some of the preexisting sister service schools.

These CA specialists would be available to respond right away. The CA specialists could conduct area surveys and help the commander identify the needs of the people is essential. Medical personnel would be able to provide some basic medical assistance following any collateral damage incidents and so on. Following the logic presented by Galula and O'Neill, the lack of an initial response could be one of the catalysts that led to the rising insurgency in Iraq between the spring and fall of 2003. The mood on the street in many places was one of loss and that life really had not improved. Murder and intimidation were joined by starvation, loss of power, and water, coupled with a rapidly deteriorating security situation, that demonstrated little presence of a viable government.

A medical and dental capability must be resident in the AP unit. This often-discussed capability has seen significant action in recent years, from the tsunamis of 2004, to earthquakes, to existing security cooperation missions around the world. A Marine that was not only a Regimental Combat Team (RCT) operations officer during the push to Baghdad, but an inspector

instructor battalion commander noted pointedly, “ During African Lion, the Moroccans were more concerned with my medical and dental capability than any thing else. I had to request augmentation.” The AP Battalion could have been his simple point of contact to fill all his security cooperation requirements.

While the AP detachment is doing its job, the need for well-trained full spectrum forces remains. According to Colonel Fournier the senior French representative to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies. “Security must be seen as a precondition for development.”²¹ Colonel Fournier also mentioned the criticality of understanding the areas and the culture one may be going into. Knowing the needs of the people and being able to do something about them. It is here where the expertise of a RAO or FAO like individual within the AP detachments could be critical or the presence of a robust infrastructure specialist would immediately become useful. The presence of RAOs and infrastructure specialist could immediately endear a population to an outside force. This was exemplified by Ramon Magsaysay’s use of his Army to rebuild schools and roads in the Huk Rebellion. It can be seen throughout the world today as Marines and sailors assist countries and peoples ravaged by natural disasters.

The contracting specialist would be of immediate assistance in the previous example as well as in a security cooperation role. As a unit operates in a permissive environment in a security cooperation role, it is likely that massive troop levels and large security elements would not be required to counter enemy actions. A contracting specialist could travel easily to the various villages units may be deployed to and help these Marines live off the local economy. Any projects identified in a company level civil affairs assessment would be processed without substantial delay, because a legal contracting agent would be present and able to move about freely. This responsiveness allows local commanders to respond to the needs of their area

without significant delays, enhancing credibility, but more importantly having a positive impact on the indigenous people.

The AP units would not use PAOs as their information operations (IO) officers; instead, the AP unit would be provided a true IO capability. The recommended organizational changes do continue to identify the need for additional training. Addressing all of the issues regarding the professional military education is beyond the scope of this project. The discussion will only evaluate the impact of a newly commissioned officer and their journey to become an information operations officer. A trained Marine Corps officer attends the basic school for six months prior to attending his or her military occupational specialty school (MOS). Developing the AP Battalion will leave the basic career path unchanged, with the exception of developing this new Information Operations (IO) specialist. Eliminate the PAO from the information operations process; allow the PAO to handle press releases. Let a truly IO trained group, not the fire support coordinator acting in a dual role, handle IO. The United States' national deficiency in the area of IO has been exploited vigorously in recent years. Rather than continuing to opine over it, create the capability by creating the properly trained people. This line of operation in many cases is the most important of all. A two-week course at Expeditionary Warfare Training Group (EWTG) Pacific or Atlantic is addressing a shortfall, but in the future, a military occupational specialty and some in depth training may better serve the Corps and the country.

This IO officer could be a specifically recruited individual from a marketing background. A recent brief at United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College referred to information operations as, "tactical perceptions". This vernacular is indicative of the new role the IO officer will fill. The concept of using a marketing student is only a concept derived from what his or her educational background may offer. For example the aim of marketing according to *Marketing*

and Management 11th Edition, "Is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself."²² The IO officer could receive a primary MOS of information officer and a secondary of civil affairs officer to broaden career mobility and provide greater depth for the Marine Corps. A marketing mindset would be better suited for developing and pursuing the methods for getting a message to the populace. A PAO could be used for communication with the press and ensuring actions are being properly documented and the home front is informed, but the information specialist could be more highly trained in all the aspects of IO.

The IO officer would head a five-man element within the AP unit, allowing him or her to detach one Marine to each line company as the companies spread out across the battle space. Additionally, the IO officer could also receive special training to serve as the Interagency Liaison Officer (ILO). This would enable the battalion commander to integrate any members and the capabilities of the interagency across the MAGTF. A company in one portion of the SCMAGTF AO may be supported by the interagency functions, while another may be supporting the interagency fight, but an ILO could assist in unity of effort.

The next change would come in the form of the FAO. There are not enough FAOs in the Marine Corps at this time to support this concept; therefore, more FAOs must be created. A geographic "Arc of Instability,"²³ has been conceptually developed and is available in many open source documents. A response to the understanding of these regions must surely follow, if it is accepted the "Arc" is America's new strategic view of the world. The creation of the AP unit, and subsequently the AP battalion could create an entire career progression for the FAO community, to include 'B' billets. The regionally focused battalions could employ FAOs as the continuity over the long term for the AP Battalion and the MCTAG.

A certified advisor team would also be part of the AP detachment. This element could train the Marines of each company to assist in the training of foreign internal defense forces, policing, and other internal functions as may be required. Meanwhile, the company in concert with the advisor team could run any purely military functions. By augmenting a battalion with this capability, a broader distribution of training could occur. A twelve-man advisor team could break down to two teams of six. That same element when spread throughout the letter companies of a battalion, could create four hundred trainers.

CONCLUSION

The DoD and Department of State are attempting to build institutional bridges that allow the U.S to approach any future security matters from across the spectrum of capabilities. The new phrase is Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations. According to future Joint Operations Concepts, "The primary focus of SSTR operations is in helping a severely stressed government avoid failure or recover from a devastating natural disaster, or on assisting an emerging host nation government to build a "new domestic order" following internal collapse or defeat in war."²⁴

The Marine Corps must be able to operate across all spectrums of combat, including active participation in SSTR operations. As the world changes and the United States, looks to assist in the peaceful cessation of conflicts around the globe, the Marine Corps must remain relevant and capable. This simple reorganization and development of the AP battalion will allow infantry battalions or Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Forces (SCMAGTF) flexibility to operate across the spectrum of conflict and in the period before conflict starts. Imagine efficiently defeating a peer competitor in high intensity combat and simultaneously providing assistance to a starving

community, or developing a cogent educational program in a far away land preventing an extremist ideology from taking hold.

While these ideas are no different from what often occurs today, it can be done more efficiently and effectively. To fulfill this new role does not require a great and unwieldy change. Many engagement organizations exist, but are tucked away in a myriad of command relationships and locations. The establishment of a C2 structure that brings these AP unit capabilities to rest under one commander on each coast will only serve to make the entire institution stronger. The Marine Corps has long used the can do attitude to accomplish things far beyond its apparent surface capability. It is now time to acknowledge that as times have changed so must the organization.

NOTES

¹ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1976) p. 87.

² Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, dated November 28, 2005.

³ U.S.M.C. Marine Corps Combat Development Command, *Marine Corps Operating Concepts for a Changing Security Environment*, Quantico, Virginia, Second edition, 2007, p. V.

⁴ U.S.M.C. Plans, Policies, & Operations, (2007) Long War Concept, Pre-Decisional Draft Working Papers, Washington, D.C. (work in progress).

⁵ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, (Newbury Park California, Sage Publications Inc.1990), p. 187.

⁶ Headquarters Department of the Army, *Operational Terms and Graphics FM 1-02/MCRP 5-12A*, (Washington, D.C. September 2004), p. 1-183.

⁷ Carl Von, Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1976) p. 89.

⁸ Frank. G. Hoffman, "Conflict in the 21st Century: The rise of Hybrid Wars." Arlington, VA, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies (2007) p. 26.

⁹ Author's notes from personal interview.

¹⁰ Based on personal experience completing the OIF Pre-deployment Training Program as a battalion operations officer.

¹¹ Author's notes from personal interview.

¹² Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith. (London, England, Oxford University Press, 1963) p.114.

¹³ U.S.M.C. Combat Development Command and U.S. Special Operations Command Center for Knowledge and Futures, Multi-Service Concept for Irregular Warfare, Quantico, VA, 2005.

¹⁴ Headquarters Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency FM 3-24, MCWP 3-33.5*, (Washington D.C. December 2006), p. 2-14.

¹⁵ The DoD QDR Execution Roadmap Building Partnership Capacity (22 May, 2006), p. 13

¹⁶ Author's notes from personal interview.

¹⁷ Headquarters Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency FM 3-24, MCWP 3-33.5*, (Washington, D.C. December 2006), p. 5-3.

¹⁸ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, (Westport, CT, Praeger Security International, original 1964), republished 2006 p. 5.

¹⁹ Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Potomac Books Inc, Washington, D.C. 2006, p. 155.

²⁰ Charles E. Callwell, *The Life of Sir Stanley Maude*, (Houghton Mifflin, Boston MA, and New York, NY, 1920), p. 279.

²¹ Author's notes from personal interview.

²² Philip Kotler, *Marketing Management* 11th Ed, (Upper Saddle River, N.J. Pearson Education LTD., 2003), p. 9

²³ U.S.M.C. Marine Corps Combat development Command, *Marine Corps Operating Concepts for a Changing Security Environment*, Quantico, Virginia, Second edition, 2007, p. xi.

²⁴ Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating Concept, December 2006, p.29.

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